

# Yeo Valley Primary School

Derby Road, Barnstaple, EX32 7HB

**Inspection dates** 15–16 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides the school with committed and passionate leadership. The whole staff team shares a fierce ambition for continual improvement to ensure that all pupils receive a good education.
- Achievement is good. All groups of pupils make good progress in English and mathematics from their individual starting points. This is because teaching is consistently good.
- Teachers plan interesting work to engage the pupils so they enjoy learning and achieve well. This is reflected in the pupils' positive attitudes towards their work and good behaviour in lessons.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, other pupils.
- The school provides pupils with a wide range of subjects and learning experiences. Specialist teaching in music and art enhances this provision and makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Strong and effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage unit has resulted in significant improvements being secured in children's achievement and the quality of teaching. This ensures the children have a very good start in their education.
- The school is a positive learning environment and this is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and attitudes towards each other. Pupils attend regularly, feel safe, and are proud of their school.
- Leaders' systems for checking on, and improving, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are rigorous and effective. Information gathered is used to good effect by leaders and governors to improve the school's work.
- The governing body is effective in checking on how well the school supports pupils' learning. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This ensures that staff are supported and challenged to improve further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers are not always helping pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects.
- Occasionally, pupils are not moved on to harder work quickly enough in lessons. This limits their progress slightly.
- Teachers do not always use feedback and marking effectively to make sure that pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Parents are not able to engage fully with their child's learning as the details of what pupils are expected to learn about are not available on the school website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 15 lessons, with one observation being undertaken jointly with the headteacher. They also observed small-group teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) and listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in their books and spoke to others about their work and other aspects of school. An inspector observed pupils at playtime.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and members of staff. They discussed many aspects of the school's work, including pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy and the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation including records of the quality of teaching, the school's information on pupils' progress, the sport funding action plan, the school improvement plan and records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- A meeting was held with four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector also spoke with an officer from the local authority.
- The views of parents were taken into consideration, including the views of several parents spoken to at the start of the school day. Too few responses were made on Parent View, the online questionnaire, to enable any analysis. However, inspectors considered the analysis of the school's own recent parents' survey.
- The opinions of staff were also considered using the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Catherine Beeks

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Yeo Valley is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are small numbers of pupils from several different minority ethnic backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils speak English as their second language.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, both full and part-time, are taught within the Foundation Stage unit that accommodates children in Nursery and Reception classes. The Nursery also caters for two-year-old children. Early years provision for children under the age of three is inspected separately.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught in single year classes. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught in single year classes in Years 3 and 6. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than would normally be expected is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of those who are supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is more than twice the national average. These additional funding supports disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school recently became a member of the Three Valleys Cooperative Learning Trust. This is a group of local schools who meet to share expertise and training.
- A privately managed nursery and a children's centre are both located within the school grounds. These are not managed by the governing body and therefore were not included in this inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding overall, in order to raise achievement, by ensuring that teachers:
  - check, when planning and teaching the full range of subjects, that pupils are being helped to practise and develop their writing skills
  - move pupils on to harder work more quickly when they demonstrate that they know what they are doing, enabling their faster progress
  - adopt a consistent approach to the way they check that pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Help parents to support their children's learning at school by providing details of the school's curriculum, both content and approach, on the school's website.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The ambition and vision of the headteacher are fundamental to pupils' good achievement and the positive ethos created at the school. Senior and middle leaders support the headteacher well. They use their individual skills, knowledge and expertise well to help secure further improvements. Staff morale is high and all are keen to see the school improve still further. This united drive for improvement, combined with effective teamwork, results in a school where all want to do the best for each other and their pupils.
- Leaders and governors are fully involved in a range of focused activities to monitor the areas that they have identified as being in need of some improvement. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the school and improvement planning is checked precisely. Leaders rigorously check how well every pupil is doing and act quickly to put actions in place to tackle any underachievement. Pupils' work in books is scrutinised by subject leaders regularly to check if standards are continuing to improve.
- Performance management procedures are used well to hold staff to account and also to support their professional development. The training teachers receive reflects their individual needs and also the needs of the school well. The school is currently increasing the impact of training and support through planning with other schools within the Three Valleys Cooperative Learning Trust.
- Funding to develop pupils' ability and participation in sport has had a good impact. Specialist sports coaches deliver high quality teaching for all pupils and model their practice to teachers within the school. This is building teachers' skills and confidence in their own practice.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of activities that are exciting and promote a high level of enjoyment. A wide variety of after-school clubs, school trips and cultural events enhance the planned work well. Activities, such as comparing life at school in Britain with a school in Borneo, help Year 1 pupils to gain a sense of British identity and prepare them for their future lives. Pupils are eager to represent the school in sport and music. Membership of the school council is contested and gives pupils an understanding of democracy.
- Pupils' behaviour, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is supported well when, for example, exploring social and moral issues about characters during guided reading sessions. Pupils' self-esteem is raised well through the many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility. For example, Year 5 pupils take interview candidates at the school on a guided tour of their school.
- The additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils has been used well. Pupils eligible for the additional funding make good progress and achieve well. For example, staff have been trained to support these pupils with their reading through a support programme. As a result, the school was successful in closing the attainment gap in reading between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates by the end of Year 6 in 2014.
- The staff do not tolerate discrimination of any kind, ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate fully in all activities. Almost all parents believe the school is led and managed well.
- The local authority provides this good school with some light touch support. However, school leaders are aware that they can use the expertise within the local authority to support school improvement as required.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is ambitious for the school. Governors have a good and accurate understanding of the school's performance in relation to other schools nationally through undertaking visits to classes and working alongside leaders. This enables them to gain some understanding of the impact of improvement plans, along with a view of the quality of teaching. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's performance and oversee the performance management of senior leaders. They are fully involved in school self-evaluation and setting the school action plan for improvement. They are aware of the impact of the additional funding on pupils' achievements, as well as the link between teachers' performance and pay. Governors receive good quality information on pupils' achievements from the school leaders and use this to challenge and support the leaders well. Governors undertake regular training and ensure that all statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their positive attitude to learning contributes strongly to their good academic and personal achievements. In lessons, pupils respond enthusiastically to their teachers' questioning and show resilience when tackling new or challenging tasks. However, on occasion, the work is not fully challenging all pupils. Sometimes, a few loose concentration and do not make the progress they should. Consequently, behaviour is not yet outstanding.
- Pupils, staff and parents who spoke to an inspector agree that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved. Pupils told inspectors that learning is rarely interrupted. This reflects the behaviour seen on inspection and over time, as shown by the small number of serious incidents recorded in the school logs.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and coming to school. Attendance has improved and is now similar to the national average. This is in response to the firm and effective action taken by leaders to improve attendance. The school rigorously follows up absence and there are now less pupils at the school with persistently high levels of absence. Children are smartly dressed in school uniform and arrive on time in the morning. This reflects pupils' pride in their school.
- Adults set a good example to pupils with regard to their behaviour. Staff are extremely respectful and thoughtful to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is equally good and pupils respond very well to the school reward system. Around the school, pupils' behaviour is good and pupils play together sensibly in the playground. They get on well together, regardless of background, and say that name calling and inappropriate language are unusual. When asked about their views of behaviour, parents were able to recognise the improvements in behaviour at the school. Almost all said that behaviour is good.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils move around the school carefully. They know how to keep safe and help each other to stay safe when playing together. Pupils all agreed that the school is a very safe place and know that the adults will quickly sort out any problems they may have. They understand different types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. Specialist teaching of information and communication technology ensures that pupils have a good understanding of what actions they need to take if they feel unsafe when using the internet.
- Pupils of all ages say that bullying is rare and this is confirmed by school records. Pupils reported that bullying stopped after the school organised annual anti-bullying week events. Most parents who spoke to an inspector agreed that behaviour and safety are good and that bullying is managed well by leaders.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching is typically good, with some that is outstanding. Inspection evidence, including a joint observation with the headteacher, discussions with pupils, staff and governors and an analysis of the school's monitoring records confirm this picture. This is having a direct impact on the improving standards and the good progress seen across the school. Almost all parents agree that this is the case.
- Policies for lesson planning have been thoughtfully implemented and leaders provide good support and guidance on how teachers can improve. Interesting activities, covering a broad range of topics and themes, motivate and challenge pupils to achieve well. A Year 6 pupil undertook the role of a newsreader to help others understand how they could improve their factual report writing using appropriate language.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to meet the different learning needs of pupils well. Lessons typically move at a fast pace and work given to pupils is set at the correct level. This ensures that they are able to make good progress. Teachers enthuse pupils by using their good subject knowledge to link activities in different subjects. Year 3 pupils were helped to understand a healthy diet and how it compared to Stone Age man's diet using their work in history.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils, especially those who have additional needs. They do this by working closely with them, whether in class, on individual programmes, or in small groups. The effectiveness of this additional help is monitored closely by the class teacher and supported by the experienced special needs coordinator. This results in all groups of pupils achieving well.
- Teachers use their understanding of pupils' learning to adapt activities when planning for future lessons. Teachers use effective questioning in lessons to check pupils' understanding and reshape activities in order to hasten the pace of learning. However, sometimes teachers do not move pupils on to harder work swiftly enough when they show they understand what they are doing.

- Teachers place a great emphasis on improving the standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This has resulted in improved progress being made across the school. Pupils understand teachers' high demands of what they expect them to achieve in English and mathematics. However, teachers do not always challenge pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects, limiting their progress slightly.
- Pupils' work is regularly and accurately marked. Teachers provide pupils with useful guidance that indicates how their work could be improved. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils are able to understand this information to make the necessary improvements and make better progress.
- Pupils and most parents agree that teaching is good, and pupils enjoy school. This is demonstrated in their positive attitudes towards their learning.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- In all classes, all groups of pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms judgements based on the school's own detailed tracking data that pupils achieve well from their individual starting points. Standards in reading and mathematics have been higher than in writing. However, the school is successfully addressing this issue and pupils are now making similar progress in all three subjects. As a result, standards in writing are improving.
- From their typically low, and often very low, starting points at the school, increasing proportions of pupils are making more progress than they would normally be expected to make. This is especially the case for pupils who remain at the school from their start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils who join the school at other times are quickly included and supported well, where necessary, to make similar progress to their peers. Pupils who have been at the school for some time leave Year 6 with standards that are similar to, and often above, the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has focused on developing pupils' early literacy skills as these are especially weak on entry. A whole school focus on improving pupils' use of phonics and grammar, punctuation and spelling has resulted in pupils' improved reading and writing across the school. Increasing and above average numbers of pupils in Year 1 are achieving well in the phonics check. This is supporting the increasing proportions of pupils who are attaining well in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils report that they enjoy reading and look forward to their regular visits to the school library.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. The same is true of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Teaching assistants support these pupils well and complement the work done in lessons with additional activities for individuals and small groups. This is especially the case for pupils who need additional support with their emotional well-being. These pupils are supported with regular group sessions, helping them to gain confidence and make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional funding are making good progress. In the 2013 tests, Year 6 pupils in this group made similar progress in reading, writing and mathematics to their classmates and other pupils nationally. The school was successful in closing the gap in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics from approximately one year in 2012 to six months in 2013. In 2014 the gap closed completely in reading and writing and narrowed further in mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that this group achieves as well as others in most year groups of pupils currently at the school, and all gaps are closing rapidly.
- The most able pupils are achieving well. Inspection evidence shows that increasing numbers of pupils are attaining the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2.

### The early years provision

is good

- Strong and effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has resulted in rapid improvement since the previous inspection. Effective teamwork and a clarity of purpose have enabled teaching to improve and have a strong impact on providing children with a good start to school.
- When children arrive at the school in the Nursery or Reception class, a very high proportion arrives with skills and understanding that are typically lower, and often significantly lower, than would normally be expected. This is especially the case in aspects of literacy and numeracy. Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children settle well and make good progress using their stronger personal and social skills to support their personal development. Children start Key Stage 1 with much stronger skills and abilities that are nearer to, and sometimes exceed, those expected for their age.
- The learning environment is well planned and exciting. Children access a good range of activities. They choose activities which interest them and they cooperate well together. This is enabling children to

develop their language, communication and social skills quickly. Children of all ages in the unit get on well together, demonstrating their good behaviour and attitudes towards school. Teachers consistently model safe practice and make sure that children understand how to play safely together.

- Teachers and other adults use expression and variation in tone to enthuse children when reading stories. This captures their imagination quickly. Ongoing checks on children's learning, combined with developing phonic skills, help children make good progress in reading and writing.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113178
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	449363

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Chapman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Reid
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29–30 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01271 375429
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